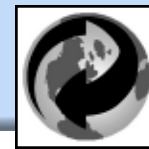


# Organizing Human Resources to Manage LGU Environmental Programs



ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Notes 1

Environmental Management



*An increasing number of local government units have developed innovative ways to leverage their limited resources by tapping volunteer experts and people highly knowledgeable in consensus-building and resource management.*

## Tapping Multidisciplinary Experts

To address environmental management issues locally, local government units (LGU) need to tap several people with various knowledge and skills. For instance, to understand better the physical characteristics of natural resources, biologists, foresters, and agriculturists are needed, among others. Social workers and social scientists are necessary to help LGUs understand why various stakeholders behave in different ways. To facilitate consensus and resolve conflicts, LGUs will need individuals with negotiation and group dynamics skills. Professionals with skills to motivate people, look for external funds, and manage resources are also needed to run local environmental programs effectively.

How can local governments avail of these various expertise given its limited budgetary and manpower resources?

Where can the LGU get external technical assistance? What types of organizations can the LGU create to sustain its vision, strategies, and priorities for environmental management? This issue of *Local Governance Technical Notes* article outlines several options. These options are derived from the combined experience of an increasing number of LGUs, nongovernmental organizations (NGO), and other organizations who have developed innovative ways to maximize the output of local government manpower and to creatively tap volunteerism.

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# Technology

## The Organizing Process

The first step in organizing human resources is to establish the locality's vision, strategies, and priorities for environmental management. This can be achieved through a consensus-building workshop using the Technology of Participation. This process and how to get assistance is described in detail in *Local Governance Technical Notes on Integrated Solid Waste Management (LGTN-ISWM) Notes 3 on Organizing Joint Action on Integrated Solid Waste Management* and *LGTN-Watershed Management Notes 4 on Building Consensus for Watershed Management*.

To manage the implementation of priority actions based on consensus, an LGU will generally require two levels of organization. First, it needs to have a multisectoral body that can exercise oversight as well as serve as local champion to ensure that priority actions are carried out. Second, it needs to have a coordination or implementation unit within the local government composed of LGU personnel.

The multisectoral body is composed of leaders representing various sectors that have a stake in the proper imple-

mentation of the environmental action program. Initially, this may take the form of a Technical Working Group (TWG) that may be created by an Executive Order for the purpose of planning and start-up activities. Eventually, a more formal body such as an Environment and Natural Resources Council (ENRC) may be established through an ordinance. The LGU may call this body by any name that symbolizes the seriousness of the effort. The LGU may also decide to create a committee of the Local Development Council for this purpose.

The main purpose of the body is to function as a "steering committee" of the LGU environment program. It shall provide a venue for discussing implementation issues and resolving conflicts. It shall serve as the principal advisory body to the local chief executive (LCE) and the Sanggunian on environmental matters.

To ensure that this body is sustained, the LGU must provide two basic forms of support. First, the LCE must be visible in this body, convene its first session, and participate actively in key sessions where decisions are needed.

Second, the LGU must provide secretariat support which can come from the appropriate line unit of the LGU. Note that the multisectoral body is not an implementing unit but an assembly of both paid government officers and volunteer leaders coming from civil society.

The LGU line unit (e.g., Environment and Natural Resources Office) on the other hand, is a critical unit because it must "make things happen." If the LGU does not have sufficient budgetary resources to hire new staff to man a new unit, it may commission an existing department to perform this function, e.g., Office of the Agriculturist or the Office of the Planning Officer. The LGU may also decide to create a unit with seconded personnel from existing departments. Whatever the LGU's option may be, the important action is to appoint a key person who can provide leadership to the ENRO and use networking skills to generate external assistance. Even if technical skills are available, they are useless if there is no leadership.

## Where and How To Get People Who Can Make a Difference

Where will the LGU get people for the multisectoral body and the line unit? How can additional outside help be obtained? There are three sources available. The first is within the existing bureaucracy. Identify natural "champions" in the LGU. They need not be senior officers, but could be young staff who demonstrate interest in environmental matters and have leadership and "people skills." Identify one to three dynamic staff and, together with non-government volunteer leaders, organize them as the initial task force that will start the process of setting

the LGU's priority action areas.

A second source is civil society. Among the citizens who actively participate in LGU programs, identify leaders who have "people skills," resource mobilization talents, and can volunteer specific technical tools and talents. Prepare a list of duties and responsibilities for volunteers. Discuss these with them at the very start. Ensure that they are provided back-up secretariat support. Give constant feedback on the volunteer work they provide. Take note also of successful farmers, fishermen, business firms, and other producers who can serve

as "model" to their peers because they can participate right in their own backyard.

A third source is external organizations such as national line agencies, technically competent NGO networks, and other free sources of technical assistance such as the U.S. Peace Corps, the British Volunteer Service Organization, and others. Show these organizations the vision and plan the LGU has forged with the citizens. Demonstrate that the LGU is already effectively using its limited resources.





## Policy and Practice

### Enabling Framework

The Local Government Code enjoins LGUs to create their Environment Natural Resources Office (ENRO) to manage LGU environmental management offices. The same Code mandates the participation of the private

sector and nongovernmental organizations (NGO) in local development councils. Recent policies on natural resources management mandate and encourage the participation of civil society organizations in local decision-

making processes through such avenues as the Environment and Natural Resources Councils (ENRC) or the Fishery and Aquatic Resources Management Councils (FARMC).

### Practices That Are Working

The Municipality of Arakan in North Cotabato conducted a consensus-building workshop using the Technology of Participation (ToP) in 1997. The workshop resulted in a shared practical vision among LGU officials, NGOs, indigenous people groups, professionals, and line agency representatives. Together, they identified the need to promote sound upland agroforestry practices as the highest priority that needed everyone's assistance.

Building on the enthusiasm of participants, the LGU then created an Environment and Natural Resources Council (ENRC) composed of leaders from various sectors. The ENRC was tasked to serve as a "steering committee" for the various activities the LGU wanted to immediately implement at the barangay level.

The LGU also created a Municipal Environment and Natural Resources Office (MENRO) and charged it with providing day-to-day leadership to the program and serve as convenor and secretariat to the ENRC.

The ENRC led the finalization of an action program for upland farm assistance. It invited resource persons from government and NGOs to help analyze their problems and recommend alternative approaches to solve these problem. Activities covered and guided by the ENRC included: the dissemination of quality planting materials on a "Plant Now, Pay Later" plan; on-site training to farmers; acquisition of a small watershed; and organization of barangay-level ENRCs.

In late 1998, the ENRC with the help of a facilitator conducted a self assessment workshop. Members identified historical trends, accomplishments, and gaps. They defined ideal attributes of an effective ENRC and evaluated their

performance against these ideal attributes. Based on their evaluation, they undertook key actions needed to enhance the implementation of their upland/agroforestry program.



*The Environmental and Natural Resources Council of Arakan in North Cotabato trained farmers to whom they disseminated quality planting materials on a "Plant Now, Pay Later" plan, especially in the rehabilitation of watershed areas.*



# LGU Action Agenda

## Other Initiatives

- In Brooke's Point and Sofronio Espanola, Palawan, the Environmentally Sustainable Development Office (ESDO) was created using existing personnel, i.e., the Vice Mayor and the Sanguniang Bayan (SB) who served as action officers. Additional staff from LGU line departments, on agriculture, health, and social welfare were detailed to ESDO as complementary staff.
- The ENRO of Nueva Vizcaya assessed its constraints, established its long-term objectives, and identified key pilot projects to develop innovative service delivery strategies including tenure instruments in watershed areas.
- The Bohol Environment Management Office (BEMO) was established by the Province of Bohol by recruiting and organizing staff from different LGU departments based on a criteria agreed upon by appropriate line agencies.



*With the Governor at the forefront, the Province of Nueva Vizcaya has forged the Land Management Agreement with occupants-tillers in watershed areas thus, converting settlers into land managers. This innovative way of organizing human resources to manage local government environmental programs won the Galing Pook Award.*

## Resources and References

You may contact successful LGUs who may share their experience in organizing multisectoral bodies and line units:

- Municipal Environment and Natural Resources Office (MENRO), Arakan, North Cotabato. Contact person: Mr. Juan Brigido Bravo
- Environmentally Sustainable Development Office, Office of the Mayor, Brooke's Point, Palawan. Contact person: Hon. Ariston Arzaga, Vice Mayor
- Environment and Natural Resources Office (ENRO), Provincial Capitol, Bayombong, Nueva Vizcaya. Contact

person: Frank Tolentino

- Environment and Natural Resources Office (ENRO), Provincial Capitol, Puerto Princesa City, Palawan. Contact person: Engr. Rodolfo T. Amurao
- Sanguniang Bayan (SB), Municipal Hall, Amlan, Negros Oriental. Contact person: Hon. Estelina Cabangal, SB Member

In addition, LGUs may contact networks to get directories of organizations that can be tapped. On solid waste management, the Solid Waste Management Association of the Philippines (SWAPP) provides information on good practices. Visit them at Unit 202,

Loyola Heights Condominium, E. Abada St., Loyola Heights, Quezon City. You may also call Tel. (02) 434-5954, c/o Ms. Joy Jochico.

On watershed management, call Philippine Watershed Management Coalition (PWMC) at Tel. (033) 320-0854; (033) 320-2373, and look for Ms. Jessica Salas. You can also reach them at 2513 Magsaysay Village, La Paz, Iloilo City.

On coastal resources management, contact the Gerry Roxas Foundation in Dayao, Roxas City at Tel. (036) 621-1922, c/o Ms. Annie Villarruz.